



State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

For Release: **IMMEDIATE**
Date: Nov. 16, 2005

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES \$130,000 IN TOURISM MARKETING GRANTS

RALEIGH — Gov. Mike Easley today announced that nearly \$130,000 in matching fund grants have been awarded for 29 tourism-related initiatives across the state. The grants range from \$2,400 to \$6,300, based on the project and the county's economic ranking, and are matched by local funds.

"This grant program allows communities to promote their areas of the state as travel destinations," Easley said. "Tourism is one of North Carolina's largest industries, with visitors spending \$13 billion last year and generating more than 183,000 jobs. These local projects help rank North Carolina among the Top 10 most-visited states in the country."

The N.C. Department of Commerce's Division of Tourism coordinates the matching fund grants program. Eligible applicants include destination marketing organizations, local government agencies and non-profit organizations with a tourism focus.

Grants awarded for 2005 include:

- **Alexander County Chamber of Commerce.** A \$3,000 grant to support production of the chamber's first tourism brochure and website.
- **Ashe County Chamber of Commerce.** A \$3,000 grant will fund "High Country Back Roads," a regional tourism multi-media marketing effort.
- **Audubon North Carolina** (statewide). A \$3,000 grant will support the marketing plan for the North Carolina Birding Trail program.
- **Boone Convention and Visitor's Bureau** (Watauga County). A \$3,000 grant will help promote the "Choose and Cut" Christmas tree program.
- **Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce.** A \$6,300 grant will be used to develop a visitor's guide promoting the area's heritage and cultural assets.
- **Carolina Arts Network Inc.** (Robeson County). A \$6,300 grant will support the advertising and promotion for the outdoor drama *Strike at the Wind!*

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